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HUMAN EVENTS  
5 December 1981

THE NEWS FROM

## Inside Washington

### Praises Cuban Economy

### Kwitny Pops Up Again In the 'Journal'

When the State Department released a White Paper on Communist arms smuggling to the Salvadoran guerrillas, the *Wall Street Journal* published a front-page story by Jonathan Kwitny that tried to discredit the evidence. Two of Kwitny's confidential sources: CIA defector and Cuban collaborator Philip Agee and John Kelly, whose publication *CounterSpy* insists the Soviets didn't invade Afghanistan (see HUMAN EVENTS, September 5, page 1). Kwitny has now reappeared on the *Journal's* front page with another story sure to bring joy to the Communists in Moscow and Havana. His latest outrage is a story claiming that the economic basket case known as the Cuban revolution is actually a success that has brought "new comforts" to the people of Cuba.

The millions of Americans who read the *Journal*, including leaders of the business community, must by now be wondering: Just what is going on at the *Wall Street Journal*?

In a front-page story that appeared in the November 16 *Journal*, Kwitny reports that the "average Cuban lives very well these days by Third World standards. He also suffers political repression, but accepts it as a price for his economic gains. He strongly supports his government's foreign and domestic policies."

"These conclusions," he says, "are based on 17 days of travel all around Cuba by bus, train and taxi, and on talks with hundreds of Cubans. An American interpreter was used, and generally no Cuban official was present."

But if the average Cuban lives well, suffers but accepts political repression, and strongly supports

#### Revolution's Heirs

The Average Cuban:  
Economic Well-Being,  
Political Repression

Most Back Castro's Policies;  
How to Fix Old U.S. Cars  
And Change Apartments

Life of a Guitarist (Class B)

By JONATHAN KWITNY  
Staff Reporter of The Wall Street Journal  
HAVANA—The average Cuban lives very

well these days by Third World standards. He also suffers political repression, but accepts it as a price for his economic gains. He strongly supports his government's foreign and domestic policies.

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By Western standards, Cuba is still a poor country. Luxuries and many routine items are scarce. Staples are rationed at food stores. If the Soviet bloc didn't buy most of Cuba's sugar crop for several times the world price, it would certainly mean trouble. A recent CIA analysis said development prospects "bleak for at least the next decade." And the U.S. mission here says 50,000 Cubans are seeking permission from Washington to go to the U.S., and that a million more—10% of the population—would flee if given a chance.

Reprinted above is the beginning of Kwitny's front page article which appeared in the November 16 *Wall Street Journal*.

his government, then why have more than a million Cubans fled the island since Castro's takeover? Why did 120,000 Cubans leave in 1980 alone? And one must pose yet another query: Since Cuba is a police state, would the people Kwitny talked to confide in him any serious reservations about the economy?

Kwitny doesn't answer those questions, but he does acknowledge that U.S. officials believe that another one million Cubans would leave if given the chance.

The numbers of refugees and potential refugees are, of course, an important measure of what life is really like in Cuba.

Lorin Philipson, the co-author of *Freedom Flights*, a book concerning the Cuban refugees, recently told HUMAN EVENTS about more than 16,000 Cubans who have escaped Castro's rule clandestinely, without government sanction. Some of them, she said, have used the occasion of hurricanes, when the island's security has been lax, to jump into the water on inner tubes wrapped with burlap. She said others escaped into Guantanamo Bay, where the American base is located, by eluding soldiers, police dogs, mine fields, electrified wires, and Vietnamese-style booby traps.

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